



Connecticut Business & Industry Association

**TESTIMONY OF
BONNIE STEWART
VICE PRESIDENT OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS
CONNECTICUT BUSINESS & INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
BEFORE THE
COMMERCE COMMITTEE
March 6, 2008**

My name is Bonnie Stewart. I am vice president of government affairs for the Connecticut Business and Industry Association (CBIA). CBIA represents approximately 10,000 member companies in virtually every industry. They range from large, global corporations to small, family owned businesses. The vast majority of our member companies have fewer than 50 employees.

CBIA has long held that the top priorities for businesses, both large and small, have been three items: more competitive business costs and lower taxes, a skilled workforce and a dependable infrastructure. Today we are focusing on two out of those three priorities: competitive costs and a skilled workforce. For this reason, we are supporting the following bills:

- **SB 399 – An Act Concerning Regulatory Relief for Small Businesses;**
- **SB 400 – An Act Eliminating the Business Entity Tax;**
- **HB 5780 – An Act Concerning the Job Creation Tax Credit Program; and**
- **HB 5584 – An Act Increasing Funding for the Incumbent Worker Training Program.**

Businesses in Connecticut have been burdened by regulatory issues and unnecessary taxes for too long. The federal government adjusted the regulatory requirements on small businesses some years ago because it was understood the impact that arduous regulations had on small businesses. CBIA supports finding ways to eliminate or streamline the current state-imposed requirements both regulatory and administrative. Furthermore, any measure that state government can take to expand tax incentives to small businesses will not only foster good will but will allow those businesses to expand, to create more jobs for people in this state and help grow our economic base.

Finally, CBIA supports any measures focused on job growth through increased funding for incumbent worker training. We have been working with the five regional workforce development boards on several initiatives to assist with workforce development and know that one of the ways to keep Connecticut strong is to ensure our workforce has the skills and training they need to evolve.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today and I am happy to answer any questions that you may have.